

Docket No. 2021-130-S

Chief Hearing Officer's Report on the Status Conference on the Joint Application for Approval of the Sale of Assets and Transfer of Facilities, Territory and Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity from Synergy Utilities, L.P. to South Carolina Water Utilities, Incorporated

A status conference was held on Tuesday, December 7, 2021 by Webex, related to the above-noted Docket. Present virtually were Scott Elliott, Esquire, representing the Joint Applicants Synergy, L.P. and South Carolina Water Utilities, Ben Mustian, Esquire, representing the Office of Regulatory Staff, John J. Pringle, Jr., Esquire, representing the City of Orangeburg, and Brad Hutto, Esquire, representing the Northwood Estates Homeowners Association, Incorporated. F. David Butler, Chief Hearing Officer, presided.

The parties stated their belief that a transfer of the Northwood Estates Sewer System to Orangeburg would lead a complete settlement of all issues in the Docket. (Note: References to "Orangeburg" indicate both the City of Orangeburg, and Orangeburg DPU.) Mr. Butler reported to the parties that, should the matter be settled, it was likely that the Commission would want to hear settlement testimony on the matter.

With regard to the transfer of the System, a delay had occurred, due to a disagreement as to how one pump station in the Northwoods Estates Sewer System would be transferred to the City. The pump station is located on a larger parcel of property. The City wants a transfer by Deed, however, the parcel has not been surveyed at this time, so the exact boundaries of the parcel containing the pump station have not been defined. Mr. Elliott emphasized that South Carolina Water Utilities still intends to convey the pump station property to Orangeburg.

Mr. Pringle suggested that, because of possible delays in having a survey done of the specified property, the City would be willing to execute a contract memorializing the transaction with South Carolina Water Utilities. Mr. Elliott displayed a willingness to work with Mr. Pringle on the execution of such a contract on behalf of his clients.

After general discussion, it was agreed that Mr. Elliott would report back to the Chief Hearing Officer on any progress towards execution of the contract and any other matters related to the case by the first business day of January 2022, which is January 3, 2022.

There being no further business, the Status Conference was adjourned.